

CAPSULE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey No.: PG:LAU-1-15 (PACS 1.19) Construction Date: circa 1940

Name: Little Tavern Hamburgers Property

Location: 115 Washington Boulevard, Laurel, Prince George's County

Private/Commercial/Occupied/Good/Unrestricted

Description:

The Little Tavern Hamburgers Property is a 1-story, 2-bay commercial building on the west side of Washington Boulevard in Laurel, Prince George's County. Constructed circa 1940, the building is rectangular in plan, and has a glass enclosure around the take-out window. The structure has a side-gable roof and a shed-roof rear wing with a stepped parapet. The front of the side-gable roof is covered in tiles and the rear in standing-seam metal. It is of brick construction, and has a brick foundation. The windows are fixed plate glass.

Significance:

The Little Tavern Hamburgers Property was built circa 1940 on the north corner of Lot 12 Block 46 by Little Tavern Shops, Incorporated. The company bought the property from Millie and Thomas Brashears in 1939. Little Tavern Shops was originally incorporated in Kentucky, but was re-incorporated under Delaware law in 1941. In 1957, the property was conveyed from the company to the president of the company, Harry F. Duncan. The property was sold in 1987 to G.E.W., Incorporated. The current owners purchased the property in 1988. Little Tavern Shops, Inc. operated a number of Little Tavern Hamburgers throughout the metropolitan Washington, D.C. region. A second Little Tavern Hamburgers still operates in Wheaton, Maryland, and there were additional locations in Alexandria, Virginia; on G Street in Washington, D.C.; and in Georgetown in the District of Columbia.

Preparer
P.A.C. Spero & Company
May 1998

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form
Montgomery-Prince George's Short-term Congestion Relief

DOE ____yes ____no

1. Name: (indicate preferred name)

historic Little Tavern Hamburgers Property (preferred)

and/or common

2. Location:

street & number 115 Washington Boulevard

n/a not for publication

city, town Laurel

____ vicinity of

congressional district

state

Maryland

county

Prince George's

3. Classification:**Category**☐ district☒ building(s)☐ structure☐ site☐ object**Ownership**☐ public☒ private☐ both**Public Acquisition**☐ in process☐ being considered☒ not applicable**Status**☒ occupied☐ unoccupied☐ work in progress**Accessible**☐ yes: restricted☒ yes: unrestricted☐ no**Present Use**☐ agriculture☒ commercial☐ education☐ entertainment☐ government☐ industrial☐ military☐ transportation☐ museum☐ park☐ private☐ residence☐ religious☐ scientific☐ other:**4. Owner of Property:** (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Tavern Real Estate Limited Partnership

street & number PO Box 7398

telephone no.:

city,town Silver Spring

state and zip code Maryland 20907

5. Location of Legal Description

Land Records of Prince George's County

liber 7685

street & number Prince George's County Judicial Center

folio 622

city,town Upper Marlboro

state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date

☐ federal☐ state☐ county☐ local

depository for survey records

city,town

state

7. Description

Survey No. PG:LAU-1-15 (PACS 1.19)

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Resource Count: 1

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Little Tavern Hamburgers Property is a 1-story, 2-bay commercial building on the west side of Washington Boulevard in Laurel, Prince George's County. Constructed circa 1940, the building is rectangular in plan, and has a glass enclosure around the take-out window. The structure has a side-gable roof and a shed-roof rear wing with a stepped parapet. The front of the side-gable roof is covered in tiles and the rear in standing-seam metal. It is of brick construction, and has a brick foundation. The windows are fixed plate glass.

The east, or front elevation has a shed-roof projection which carries a two-sided neon sign, and there is a second neon sign at the ridgeline. The entrance is located in the second bay, and has a pedimented hood supported by brackets. There is a large picture window in the first bay, with a brick sill and an inverted jack arch. There is vertical brick detailing at the cornice line. The door into a metal and glass enclosure around the take-out window is located on the east elevation.

The north elevation is composed of the gable-end of the front-wing and the rear ell. There is a large picture window in the gable-end with a brick sill and inverted jack arch. The gable has decorative shingle detailing and a tiled roofline. The rear ell has a stepped parapet with vertical brick detailing. There is a single large picture window, and three smaller fixed-light windows in the rear ell. All have vertical brick sills and inverted jack arches.

The west, or rear elevation is composed of the rear roof of the front wing and the rear elevation of the ell. There is a large picture window with a brick sill and inverted jack arch in the first bay. The second bay has a 6-light door with a vertical brick lintel.

The south elevation is composed of the gable-end of the front wing and the rear ell. There are two large picture windows and a tall, narrow window in the rear ell. All have vertical-brick sills and inverted jack arches. The stepped parapet has vertical brick detailing. There is a take-out window in the gable-end of the front wing. It is enclosed by a metal and glass flat-roof box. The gable has decorative shingle detailing and a tiled roofline.

There are no outbuildings associated with this property.

The Little Tavern Hamburgers Property is located on the west side of Washington Boulevard next to Fetty Alley, and is surrounded by commercial properties to the north and west, and by the Laurel Post Office property to the east and south. The surrounding lot is paved for parking. The setting is relatively unaltered from the historic setting.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
__prehistoric	__archaeology-prehistoric	__Community planning	__landscape architecture	__religion
__1400-1499	__archeology-historic	__conservation	__law	__science
__1500-1599	__agriculture	__economics	__literature	__sculpture
__1600-1699	X __architecture	__education	__military	__social/
__1700-1799	__art	__engineering	__music	humanitarian
__1800-1899	__commerce	__exploration/settlement	__philosophy	__theater
X 1900-	__communication	__industry	__politics/government	__transportation
		__invention	__other (specify)	

Specific dates	circa 1940	Builder/Architect
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check: Applicable Criteria: A B X C D
and/or
Applicable Exceptions: A B C D E F G
Level of Significance: national state X local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Little Tavern Hamburgers Property was built circa 1940 on the north corner of Lot 12 Block 46 by Little Tavern Shops, Incorporated. The company bought the property from Millie and Thomas Brashears in 1939. Little Tavern Shops was originally incorporated in Kentucky, but was re-incorporated under Delaware laws in 1941. In 1957, the property was conveyed from the company to the president of the company, Harry F. Duncan. The property was sold in 1987 to G.E.W., Incorporated. The current owners purchased the property in 1988. Little Tavern Shops, Inc. operated a number of Little Tavern Hamburgers throughout the metropolitan Washington, D.C. region. A second Little Tavern Hamburgers still operates in Wheaton, Maryland, and there were additional locations in Alexandria, Virginia; on G Street in Washington, D.C.; and in Georgetown in the District of Columbia.

The Little Tavern Hamburgers Property is located in Laurel. Laurel is located on land originally patented to Richard Snowden in 1715 as "Snowden's New Birmingham Manor" in Prince George's County. "Snowden's New Birmingham Manor" was approximately 1214 hectares (3000 acres) from Old Columbia Pike to the present city of Laurel, and from south of Greencastle and Van Dusen Roads to north of Sandy Spring Road. The 1715 patent increased the already substantial Snowden land holdings, and later additions to Snowden land eventually covered 3749 hectares (9265 acres) by 1743. (Cook 1976: 270-271).

The Snowden family had established a grist mill at Laurel about 1810. In 1824, the grist mill was adapted to spin cotton yarn that was shipped to textile mills. In 1835, the mill was converted back to a grist mill. Snowden family members and the O.C. Tiffany company of Baltimore established the Patuxent Cotton Manufacturing Company. Factory buildings were built along the river, and the town of Laurel developed as a manufacturing town along Main Street running between the factory and the B&O Railroad station (Prince George's County 1974: 283; Prince George's County Historical Society 1980: 37). Laurel became the largest town in the county. The textile mill provided the basis for Laurel's economy into the twentieth century. When textile output began to decline early in the century, Laurel began to develop as a suburb for both Washington and Baltimore. Located halfway between the two cities, Laurel was accessible to commuters by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and by U.S. 1 (Prince George's County 1974: 284).

The Little Tavern Hamburgers Property is an excellent example of mid-twentieth century roadside commercial architecture. As the development of the automobile led to highway improvements during the first half of the twentieth century, the increasing numbers of motorists using these improved

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MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

RESOURCE NAME: Little Tavern Hamburgers Property

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8. Significance (Continued)

highways soon led to roadside commercial development, particularly along primary routes. About the time of World War I, shops began to appear along these routes almost anywhere the law permitted. Gas stations, produce stands, hotdog stands, restaurants, tourist cabins, motels, and many other businesses catered to a new generation of high-speed travelers. To capture their attention, there also appeared various forms of highly visible advertising such as billboards, signs prominently placed in front of businesses, and advertisements painted onto the sides of barns and other structures. With the emergence of a society in which most families owned cars, business owners could now locate in areas that had once been rural where large parking lots could accommodate their customers, and where land was cheaper than in town centers. These developments led to the decline of urban retailing districts all over the country particularly in the years following World War II.

In rural America, the rise of high-speed highways harmed some long-established businesses catering to local residents while giving rise to new businesses aimed at travellers. General stores, for example, declined during the middle decades of this century as rural customers gained easier access to stores in urban areas with better selection and lower prices. New businesses, however, such as motels, restaurants, and gas stations thrived during this period. Some older structures, such as train stations, were often converted into restaurants, souvenir shops, or bars. Roadside businesses aimed at middle class travelers by building structures that resembled bungalows with a tidy front yard and geraniums in the front windows. Other businesses employed marketing techniques similar to those used by amusement parks by constructing fantastically shaped advertising and attention-grabbing neon signs (Liebs 1985: 5-9).

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8. Significance (Continued)

National Register Evaluation:

The Little Tavern Hamburgers Property, constructed circa 1940, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, as an excellent example of a mid-twentieth century "signature store" commercial building property. The property represents the growth of roadside businesses designed to capture the attention and business of passing motorists. It has excellent integrity, and retains its original tile roof, neon signs, and decorative features such as shingled gable-end and pedimented door hood. The interior retains the counter and stools. The Wheaton store has similar design features, such as a tile roof and inverted jack arches. The property is not eligible under Criterion A, as research conducted indicates no association with any historic events or trends significant in the development of national, state, or local history. Historic research indicates that the property has no association with persons who have made specific contributions to history, and therefore, it does not meet Criterion B. Finally, the structure has no known potential to yield important information, and therefore, is not eligible under Criterion D.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST	
Eligibility recommended <u>XX</u>	Eligibility Not Recommended _____
Comments <u>One of the few that survive intact</u>	
Reviewer, OPS: <u>[Signature]</u> Date: _____	
Reviewer, NR Program: <u>[Signature]</u> Date: _____	

[Handwritten initials]

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. PG:LAU-1-15(PACS 1.19)

See Attached

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 4000 square feet (.09 acres or .036 hectares)

Quadrangle name Laurel, MD Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Attached

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan L. Taylor

organization P.A.C. Spero & Company

date May 1998

street & number 40 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 412

telephone (410) 296-1635

city or town Baltimore

state Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposed only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust

DHCP/DHCD

100 Community Place

Crownsville, MD 21032-2023

(410) 514-7600

CONTINUATION SHEET

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

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9. Major Bibliographical References (Continued)

- Brugger, Robert A. 1988. Maryland, A Middle Temperament 1634-1980. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
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- Hiebert, Ray Eldon, and Richard K. MacMaster. 1976. A Grateful Remembrance: the Story of Montgomery County, Maryland. Rockville, Maryland: Montgomery County Government and the Montgomery County Historical Society.
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- Land Records of Prince George's County, Upper Marlboro, Maryland.
- "The Laurel Factory." News and Notes from the Prince George's County Historical Society. (July 1980): 38-40. (First published in The American Farmer. Baltimore, Maryland, August 1845.)
- Liebs, Chester H. 1985. Mainstreet to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture. Boston: Little Brown & Co.
- McAlester, Virginia and Lee. 1984. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Poe, Gertrude L. 1970. Laurel, Maryland: Centennial Souvenir Booklet. Laurel, Maryland: The News Leader.
- Prince George's County Community Renewal Program. 1974. The Neighborhoods of Prince George's County. Upper Marlboro, Maryland: Prince George's County Government.
- Tindall, George Brown. 1984. America: A Narrative History. 2 vols. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Virta, Alan. 1984. Prince George's County: A Pictorial History. Rev. 1991. Virginia Beach: The Donning Company Publishers.
- Virta, Alan. "The Pretty, Rosy-Cheeked Girls of Laurel." News and Notes from the Prince George's County Historical Society. (July 1980): 37.

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STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

RESOURCE NAME: Little Tavern Hamburgers Property

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ADDRESS: 115 Washington Boulevard, Laurel, Prince George's County

10. Geographical Data (Continued)

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification:

The National Register boundaries of the Little Tavern Hamburger Property follow the current property lines of 115 Washington Boulevard (Tax Map 6 and Block 34 Parcel 12). This 371.6 square meter (4000 square foot) parcel is bounded on the west and south by adjacent parcels and on the north by Fetty Alley, and on the east by Washington Boulevard. The boundary includes the Little Tavern Hamburgers building. According to deed research, the property was originally part of Lot 12 in Block 43, the northern portion of which was purchased by Little Tavern Shops, Inc. in 1939. The boundaries follow the historic boundaries of the property.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

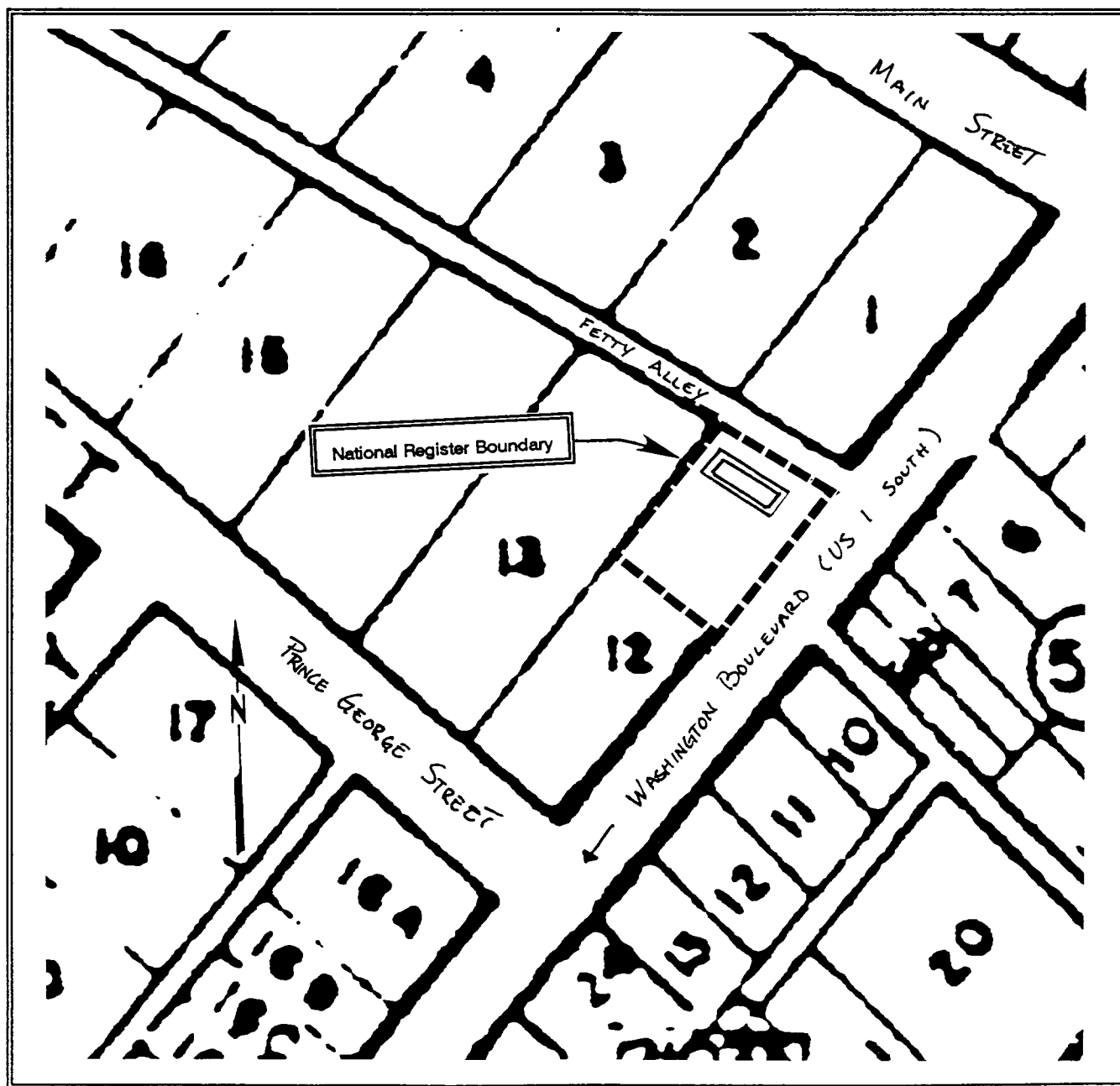
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10. Geographical Data (Continued)

Resource Sketch Map and National Register Boundary Map:





1 PG 100-1-18

2 Little Tavern Handwritten Property

3 Prince George, Co, Md

4 Susan Taylor

5 5/98

6 Md SHPO

7 Elevation

8 1 of 2



- 1 PG 100-1-15
- 2 Little town in Hamburg property
- 3 Prince Georges Co. Md
- 4 Susan Taylor
- 5 5198
- 6 Md SHPO
- 7 N.E. Carter
- 8 2-1-8



- 1 PG Land-1-15
- 2 Little pr. with landscape Property
- 3 Prince George's Co, Md
- 4 Susan Taylor
- 5 5/98
- 6 Md SHPO
- 7 N elevation.
- 8 3 of 8



1 Ph. 22-1-1

2 Little Lagoon Hamburg Property

3 Prince Georges Co, Md

4 Susan Taylor

5 5/98

6 Md 8H10

7 NW corner

8 4 S, S



1 PG 1 an 1-15

2 Little known Hamburg Property

3 Prince Georges Co, Md

4 Susan Taylor

5 5/98

6 Md SHPO

7 W elevation

See also 12/11/98

8 5/98



1 P.O. Box 105

2 Little Tavern Harbinger Property

3 Prince Georges Co, Md

4 Susan Taylor

5 5/98

6 Old SHPO

7 SW corner

8 6 of 8



1 PG. LAM-1-15

2 Little - Inven. Chas. B. & Prop. B.

3 Prince Georges Co, Md

4 Susan Taylor

5 5/98

6 Md SHPO

7 S elevation

8 1 5 5



1 PC. 1 an. 1. 15

2 Little Tavern Hambruge Property

3 Prince Georges Co. Va

4 Susan Taylor

5 5/98

6 Md SHPO

7 SE corner

8 8 of 8